

## **Minutes of the Imperial Valley/Mexicali Air Quality Taskforce Meeting**

SDSU, Imperial Valley Campus  
December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2005, Calexico, CA

**Co-chairs:** Margarito Quintero and Kimberly Collins

### **Attendance:**

**Margarito Quintero**, UABC Institute of Engineering; **Kimberly Collins**, San Diego State University, Imperial Valley Campus; **Jesus Jimenez Payan**, PROFEPA Assistant Representative in Mexicali; **Kathryn Dowling**, California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment; **Marco Antonio Reyna**, researcher, UABC Institute of Engineering; **Gonzalo Huerta**, Dean of Instruction for Applied Sciences, Imperial Valley College; **Michelle Stevens**, Environmental Science professor, Imperial Valley College; **Rich Ryan**, Public Administration, SDSU Imperial Valley Campus; **Carlos Ortiz**, student, SDSU Imperial Valley Campus; **Andrea Rodiles**, Public Administration student, SDSU Imperial Valley Campus; **Joe Maruca**, Imperial County Board of Supervisors; **Thomas Brinkerhoff**, Imperial County Air Pollution Control District; **Dave Fege**, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, San Diego Office; **Manuel Zamora**, Director, Mexicali Municipal Ecology Department (Dirección Municipal de Ecología de Mexicali); **Denise Ducheny**, California State Senator for District 40.

**I. Welcome and Opening Remarks:** **Kimberly Collins** and **Margarito Quintero** welcomed attendees, thanking them for their attendance, and informed them that there were copies of the Minutes from the previous meeting and the current Agenda available.

### **II. Self-Introductions.**

**III. Review of Minutes from Last Meeting.** Kimberly Collins asked everyone to let **Thomas Brinkerhoff** know if there were any changes needed to the minutes, and added that, in theory, all the Minutes and Agendas were available on the Border 2012 webpage.

She shared that, if there were no objections, the Agenda for this meeting would be modified to allow **Dr. Joe Maruca** and State Senator **Denise Ducheny** to address the group.

### **IV. Presentations:**

**a) Dr. Joe Maruca** began by expressing that he had been involved in Clean Air issues from the outset, including the Northern Baja pipeline and the Intergen and La Rosita power plants.

He shared that several things that have happened have led him to believe that a major change is impending in the border region: At a meeting there was mention of what is now being called "the Green Line" to convey geothermal power out of the valley from the proposed power plant in the Niland area. This could lead to having more power plants set up on the Mexican side of the border, aided by the establishment of the LNG pipeline, the potential Silicon Border industrial park, and the population growth in Mexicali. He added that everyone they have talked to refuses to confirm or deny whether there will be new power plants setting up on the Mexican side of the border.

He then spoke of a tour of the Intergen plant he was invited to take six months before. He expresses his surprise at the fact that it is all automated, with one person in a control

room surrounded by equipment and alarms. He was asked for his agency's help for the establishment of a cross-border, binational pollution-free air zone, but were unclear as to what they wanted to do.

Nobel laureate Dr. Molina, who is doing some studies on the border region, was mentioned at the meeting, since InterGen is contributing funds to his study. Dr. Maruca said he would contact him and invite him come talk to the taskforce.

Apparently, their concern is "having a level playing field", although they would not go into specifics.

Imperial County is committed to creating a 100-kilometer (north-south) pollution control zone or agreement. The mayor of Mexicali is very interested in it, as is Congressman Filner.

He shared that he obtained an e-mail for Dr. Molina from a newspaper article, and invited the group to stay in contact with him to stay informed as to what he finds out from him, adding that he has not been able to contact him yet.

The group informed him of several possibilities as to what department at UCSD he may be working with.

**Margarito Quintero** shared that he had been contacted by Dr. Molina's office in Mexico City asking to schedule an appointment with him in San Diego to discuss the project Dr. Maruca mentioned in his presentation. He added that he tried to contact him at his office in the Institute of the Americas to let them know he was available, but has received no response.

He mentioned that there will be a program supported by Sempra to do pollution studies in the area.

He added that Dr. Molina is going to start a project in Mexico City called "Mirage", which will consist of using special airplanes to do real-time atmospheric air sampling, as well as ground-level pollution detection systems. Then they will model the dispersion of the smog cloud away from Mexico City.

He said it would be like looking at Mexico City as a stack, and seeing what effect its emissions have in surrounding areas. The project is funded by the U.S.

This project will be followed by similar projects in other cities, such as Sao Paulo and Japan.

He stressed Dr. Molina's interest in studying the air of areas affected by pollution, including the border region, and that he created the Atmospheric Studies Institute (*Instituto de Investigaciones Atmosféricas*) in Mexico City. So Dr. Molina is not only very well versed on the issue, but is also very well respected and has political support from both sides of the border.

**Joe Maruca** asked about whether it was Sempra or InterGen who involved in the project.

**Margarito Quintero** replied that he was informed that it was Sempra who was sponsoring Dr. Molina's project. He said it was possible that it was both, but the only name he heard was Sempra.

**Joe Maruca** added InterGen had told him it was they who were sponsoring the project, and ventured that perhaps Sempra has joined them since. A member of the group expressed that these were perhaps different projects, and Dr. Maruca added that he had copies of the InterGen project on his desk, in case someone was interested in looking at it.

**Kimberly Collins** asked if he could send this information out to her, and she would share it with Margarito Quintero and other stakeholders. She also mentioned that Dr. Molina was on the board of LASPAU to select their projects. She said that it was probably Sempra, since he is working with UCSD, who is supported in other projects by Sempra.

**b) Senator Denise Ducheny** thanked the taskforce for the invitation. She began by expressing that she had been asking InterGen to do a project such as the one mentioned by Supervisor Maruca since six years ago, even prior to becoming Senator.

She said that SDG&E has expressed interest in implementing mitigation measures, even if it is Sempra's emissions they are mitigating, because of their need to have additional transmission lines to North San Diego County. She mentioned that they have interest in renewable energy projects in Imperial County, mainly in solar energy.

She asked the group, as she had discussed with Kimberly Collins, to define the priority projects for the region, on both sides of the border, from the air quality perspective. She gave the examples of paving roads, converting buses to natural gas, trash-burning, etc.

She added that the list should include the cost of the projects, and the levels of air pollution reduction that would be obtained for the amount of investment.

This would allow everyone when having conversations with any of these companies – SDG&E, InterGen, Sempra, etc. – to negotiate based on projects that we know would produce results.

**Joe Maruca** mentioned that SDG&E was originally going to partner with the Imperial Irrigation District (IID) for the transmission line, but now IID is going to partner with Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP). San Diego is now working feverishly to be involved once again. The financing for this transmission would be provided by Mr. Kennedy's "non-profit" group out of Boston, and would be paid back with wheeling fees. This would allow IID to not make an initial investment. He expressed his concern regarding this situation.

**Senator Ducheny** replied that, as she understands it, LADWP wanted to use IID's lines/right of way until the Salton Sea, where they would have to cut over to other lines to convey it to its destination.

**Joe Maruca** added that he felt IID's idea was that if they could pay for the lines themselves, they could then charge wheeling fees to San Diego or anyone else that wanted to use these lines.

**Senator Ducheny** continued by asking for help from the Mexican section regarding how to work on legislation allowing cross-border mitigation credits to occur. There is a model from El Paso/Juarez, where there is a joint pollution control authority. She expressed that it could perhaps be achieved by means of a resolution from the California legislature and a parallel resolution from the Baja California State Congress.

She was unsure as to whether it would have to include the federal government. Kimberly Collins mentioned that it would not fall under the Clean Air Act. Senator Ducheny mentioned that perhaps it could be started on a smaller scale (versus the 100-kilometer strip), using Imperial/Mexicali as a pilot project, since the air basin is in non-attainment on both sides of the border, and it does not have the complexities of other areas, such as San Diego/Tijuana or Nogales.

The pilot project would include cross-border mitigation, perhaps a joint board, but asked for help in how it should be approached. She reiterated that the current Mayor of Mexicali is very interested in this, and he only recently came into office, so it represents an opportunity that should not be wasted.

The third issue she brought up was a smog program. She mentioned that there was a program in Tijuana, but did not work as well as expected.

The program works as follows: California donates smog check equipment and provides technical training for smog check facilities in Baja California, who would be responsible for having the facilities and doing the testing.

She expressed that a follow up program would be needed, to address what to do with polluting cars, whether doing repairs or buying them back, as well as using the

monitoring done by this group or others to measure the success of the project, and thus having accountability for the success of the project.

She also mentioned the need for a better system to avoid creating new tire piles, particularly now that the Centinela pile is being eliminated, adding that the California Plan would require analyzing and studying border issues, and what could be done better and to include tire management in the California Board Plan.

This, she said is a border-wide issue, being addressed by the Border Legislators Conference, and closed by stressing that this is ultimately an air quality problem, and the best solution would be to figure out how to keep them from piling up.

**Joe Maruca** mentioned that there was also a problem with Americans coming into Mexicali to discard waste tires.

**Senator Ducheny** responded that those tires were now being disposed of with funding from the U.S. federal government, and they are being shipped to cement kilns in Ensenada and Hermosillo to be used as energy. She added that what they are proposing is exactly the tracking, and ensuring that the used tires being sold are still usable, how to make sure they are being disposed of appropriately, etc.

**Kimberly Collins** mentioned that the issue of a binational airshed had been discussed for five years, and CARB, who used to attend these meetings, had expressed that it could not be called an "airshed" because of legislative implications. She added that perhaps a resolution could be drafted, where the area is not called an "airshed", and which included data collection, and having comparable sets of data for the area, and a design for this 100-kilometer clean air basin/area, adding that **Manuel Zamora** is a lawyer, so his expertise could prove helpful.

**Senator Ducheny** expressed that it would have to be a joint body, perhaps something similar to this taskforce, but perhaps with a more formal structure, including government entities.

**Rich Ryan** added that, from what he had read, he understood that the Texas arrangement had been made between a Texas utility, with the agreement of the Texas State Public utilities Commission and Ciudad Juarez, without federal involvement.

He said that perhaps the list of priorities mentioned could be included, adding that the ICAPCD and the Municipal government of Mexicali would certainly have a list of priority issues they would like to see addressed, and so it should not be difficult to come up with a mutual list.

**Senator Ducheny** asked whether it could be done through an MOU, or if a resolution or legislation would be needed.

**Dave Fege** expanded on the reason the El Paso/Juarez agreement was done as it was, expressing that under federal law EPA did not have jurisdiction over all sources of pollution, leaving smaller sources to the state and local governments. The plant in Texas did not come under federal authority, and in order to be able to emit more on the U.S. side, they paid for cleaner and better technology for brick kilns in Juarez (as an offset).

He also mentioned that the terminology being used in this discussion is very general, and could have different meanings for different people.

In the case, for example of "Emission Reduction Credits", it would be either illegal or practically impossible to do it across the border under the Clean Air Act. ICAPCD would not have any authority, for example, to do enforcement in Mexicali, if this was where the reduction was. There are also characteristics, such as having quantifiable pollution reductions, i.e., to make sure that they are "real" reductions. He added that EPA is not against the idea, as a concept, but they have to make sure that it works.

As regards data, he stated that Imperial County has been monitoring air quality for many, many years, and thus has a lot of good historical data. Mexicali also has a network that EPA and CARB have been supporting, with about 8-10 years of data.

**Senator Ducheny** pointed out that this was the difference between this area and the rest of the border.

**Dave Fege** continued by saying that it could be argued that the network is not as extensive as it should be, but there is data available.

Additionally, EPA has been working with Mexico on a border-wide emissions inventory, and, through the Western Governors Association, there is now an emissions inventory for Mexicali. He suggested inviting the Western Governors Association to do a presentation on it before the group, to have a better idea of where the sources are. This knowledge allows you to establish better priorities.

He closed by saying that everything that is done to help Mexicali does not only benefit the residents of Mexicali, but can also help Imperial County to reach attainment for ozone and PM10, and he knows that Imperial is working hard to do so.

**Senator Ducheny** added that this was precisely the point behind the cross-border emissions discussion. You could get greater improvement in air quality in Imperial Valley for less money by doing something in Mexicali (paving roads, removing old vehicles, converting buses to natural gas), than by anything you could do in Imperial Valley. The issue is how do you establish a mechanism to allow this to occur, and part of it has to be a joint air pollution control authority, including all appropriate agencies. Its scope would also have to be defined, as well as its role in facilitating the cross-border mitigation. She added that new legislation would also be needed, at least on the California side.

**Kimberly Collins** added that she believed that something could be done on a State level, provided that there is appropriate legislation, so long as it is not called a "binational airshed" and does not have permitting powers.

**Marco Antonio Reyna** began by expressing that it was a great pleasure to have **Senator Ducheny** attend the meeting, because he felt that there was an "official ear" out there listening to the group's concern.

He said that the issue of pollution is also a health issue. The group had been proposing a project for several years, which is now finding support, to standardize the surveillance of the main ailments impacted by high levels of air pollution. The idea is to study how epidemiological reporting is done in Mexicali and Imperial Valley to identify the differences and propose a joint, standardized alternative. The project has just received funding, and they are requesting an extension.

He felt pleased that the Senator mentioned precisely what they were looking for in their project. Having an entity or organization, perhaps called a binational committee, that addressed not only levels of pollution, but also surveillance of illnesses caused or aggravated by such high levels of pollution. He stressed that pollution levels and environmental health should be addressed jointly, and not as isolated issues.

**Jesus Jimenez Payan** mentioned that he would have liked for a Mexican Federal Representative or Senator, or even a State Representative to have also attended the meeting.

He expressed that the existing limits and standards are insufficient to meet what is required. A lot, he said, could be done to decrease the levels of pollution in the area, whether you call it an airshed, a basin, or anything else, so long as everyone works together and in coordinated fashion. He added that he does not know the reason for the absence by SEMARNAT, ISSESALUD, and other agencies. An official, structured group of authorities is not needed, instead, each of the agencies independently, but working in coordination, can put forth proposals for resolving the issues.

As regards InterGen and other border region power plants, he mentioned that they present their monitoring results indicating that they are complying with existing standards. He asked anyone who knows about any criterion that these companies are not complying with, to please let him know, so he can contact SEMARNAT, who has the

capacity to act in the benefit of the community. There is also the need for the different Mexican agencies to sit down as a group and reach conclusions. For example, the Municipal government could come up with legislation to avoid trash burning in homes, or to keep those who are selling copper wire from burning it to remove the insulation.

He felt that the group needs to work more actively, taking action, and not merely meet every so often.

He stressed that it is very important to bring all the different Mexican agencies back to the table, and to take action together, because there are a lot of issues, such as air quality, chemical emergency response, etc. He suggested having unilateral meetings too, for the agencies in each country to meet independently, and then bring the results from their meetings to the taskforce, so that actions can be taken.

**Manuel Zamora** agreed with **Jesus Jimenez Payan** as to the fact that action needs taken, but differed as to the need for a formal binational entity. He mentioned that because of the changes of government in Mexico, every three years in the case of the Municipal government, and every six in the case of the Federal government, many times there is no follow up to projects.

He gave the example of how the municipal government created the Municipal Forestation Committee, stating that without it the Laguna Mexico project would not have moved forward. Through the committee, there was participation of all three levels of government and the community. Some people have changed, but the Committee is still there to give continuity to the goals. The Lagoon has been cleaned and reforested, with the cooperation of all levels of government. He shared that other efforts to clean up the site had failed, but by having a Committee they were able to achieve it. This could also be applied to air quality issues, on a binational level. He suggested that it should be on a State-to-State level, since passing federal legislation is a longer and more complicated process, and since the federal senators and representatives are all thousands of miles away from the border.

At this binational committee, attendance would be mandatory. He felt that it was necessary then to formalize it, and to also invite the media, because their support is essential. Community participation is also essential, because awareness needs to be raised so that they do not contribute to this pollution. Everyone at this table, he said, is probably very careful about not polluting, but we need to educate the public at large.

At the Municipal government, they have the final draft of the Vehicle Verification Ordinance, which will now be sent to City Council for approval.

He stressed that the issues are well known by everyone, and now, as Mr. Payan mentioned, what is needed is action.

He personally committed to getting an appointment for **Senator Ducheny** with the Representative in charge of environmental issues, because time is of the essence, since 2006 will be an election year in Mexico.

**Kimberly Collins** suggested setting up a meeting before or after the next Border 2012 meeting, which will be held on February 9<sup>th</sup> or 16<sup>th</sup>, perhaps shortening the meeting time to accommodate it, bringing together federal, state and local representatives, and asked **Jesus Jimenez Payan** and **Manuel Zamora** for their help.

**Joe Maruca** mentioned that Congressman Filner would be very interested in attending, and to let him know as soon as possible so that he can fit it into his schedule, if possible.

**Rich Ryan** added that the State level was the most important to include. He shared that the State of California had a very successful program called the "Carl Moyer Dirty Diesel Replacement Program".

**Thomas Brinkerhoff** explained that the "Carl Moyer" program is a program in Imperial County in which the District allots funds for new equipment, new engines, and such.

**Rich Ryan** added that if it could be expanded to Mexicali for a year or two to replace dirty diesel buses the impact would be immediate.

**Senator Ducheny** replied that the program would in fact work, but the issue would be funding. It is complicated to spend funding in Mexico. She stressed once again that if there were a binational entity, then funding could be funneled to them, and then they could have their own “Carl Moyer” program.

She shared that there is a huge future opportunity in the form of bio-diesel. There are still some issues with CARB concerning NO<sub>x</sub> levels, but does have lower emissions of other pollutants. It allows, using the example of farmers, to blend it with regular diesel, lowering emissions without having to convert their engines into natural gas. And since it is produced from agricultural waste, then there would be an economic advantage to producing it locally.

She reiterated that the issue with funding projects in Mexicali, although they would have a greater impact for a lesser investment, is how to transfer the funds to Mexicali. She mentioned that in San Diego they overcame this issue – for wastewater treatment – by giving the funds to the City of San Diego, and then having San Diego be the one who funded projects in Tijuana.

**Dave Fege** informed the group that they are doing a Clean Diesel Demonstration Program in San Diego/Tijuana. EPA granted the San Diego Air Pollution Control District \$225,000 to retrofit up to 40 diesel trucks in Tijuana that come across the border. On a personal level, he feels that it would also be a good project for Mexicali.

**Kathryn Dowling** asked whether bio-diesel was produced using alfalfa waste, and if it would create a secondary benefit by reducing agricultural waste burning in Imperial Valley.

**Senator Ducheny**, along with some other attendees, contributed that it was manufactured with sunflower oil, or other vegetable oils, including waste oils from fast food chains.

**Margarito Quintero** added that it can also be obtained from soy.

He mentioned that at the Border Energy Forum in Santa Fe they inaugurated a bio-diesel station. There are also some bio-diesel stations in Texas.

As to **Kimberly Collin's** comment to have an additional meeting in February, together with **Jesus Jimenez Payan's** comment of the lack of attendance by some agencies, he mentioned that there is a database of anyone who has ever attended the meetings, and although they get an Agenda via e-mail they still do not show. So, if we want the meeting suggested by Kimberly to be successful, each member in attendance should make the commitment to bring a “guest”, and for each person to confirm via phone or e-mail who they are going to bring.

**Kimberly Collins** mentioned that there are two holidays in February, and that U.S. state and federal representatives would have the 13<sup>th</sup> off, asking whether they would be willing to attend a meeting on their day off.

**c) Presentation: The Remodeling of Laguna Mexico. Manuel Zamora**, Mexicali Director of Ecology. The project was made possible by the support of the community and all three levels of government.

Under Municipal regulations, all developers must donate 10% of the area approved to the government. Unfortunately, most of the time these donations are made as scattered dots throughout the city. In this particular case, it was donated by a company who was going to develop an area close to the lagoon, and they asked the company to bring all these “dots” together and donate the lagoon area, creating a 13-hectare expansion where the Municipal government could develop an Ecology Park with a hiking/biking trail and a green belt.

As mentioned earlier, the project was done through the Municipal Forestation Committee, which brings together all three levels of government and the community.

There were two projects originally proposed: the *Laguna Mexico* and *Bosque Renacimiento* (Renaissance Forest); however, the Baja California State government already had another project planned for the latter site.

He showed images of the area, including the Mexicali golf course and Country Club.

This lagoon, which is part of the New River, was being used as a dump, including garbage, refrigerators, stoves, tires, etc. The site, which serves as a rest stop for migratory birds, has now been cleaned up.

The project goes beyond the mere development of an Ecology Park, and will include a hiking trail, a bike trail, and a green belt surrounding the area. The idea came from other similar projects, most of them in Spain, where railroad tracks are used as green belts, and also showed images from a similar project in Yuma, AZ.

The project was started in January of 2005, with the Eco-Park phase. The park area was cleaned up with the support of neighbors, the Irrigation District, and CNA (National Water Commission). The area is under constant surveillance, including a neighbors' committee. Approximately 60 palm trees, which had been removed from other areas, were planted at the site.

The Municipal Ecology Department is also enrolled in the National Forest and Water Crusade, sponsored by SEMARNAT.

An application was submitted to the National Water Commission in November requesting delimiting the Federal Land Zone, such that the trail and green belt phases of the project can move forward.

In preparation for the trails, trash and soil have been removed.

Another important point which will ensure continuity of the project was the creation of a trust, which will be in charge of maintaining the area.

On November 12<sup>th</sup>, they began planting 6,250 trees – donated by the National Forestation Commission and the City government – at the site, with the participation of over 1,200 volunteers and all three levels of government. The motivation for involving the community was to give them a sense of belonging and stewardship, since government participation is not enough. He added that media involvement is also important to publicize the project.

The park will have an outdoor amphitheater, overlooking the lagoon, for concerts and environmental education events.

The following week around 900 more trees were planted.

Prior to this project, the lagoon itself was not visible, as it used to be covered in garbage and overgrowth.

He presented the second phase of the project, to be carried out in 2006-2007. It will include the drafting of internal bylaws, an operation and conservation plan through the trust, and paving of the main roads leading to the lagoon from surrounding communities.

**Marco Antonio Reyna** recalled that he learned to swim as a child at this lagoon. He said it was quite an adventure to go through all the different lagoons in Mexicali.

Back in the '70s, many visitors from the U.S. and Canada used to water ski at Laguna Mexico.

He suggested an additional alternative for the reconstruction of this corridor. There is a fund called the North American Wildlife Protection Fund, with funding provided by the U.S., Mexico and Canada.

He added that Alberto Tapia has documented all the species that used to exist and that have disappeared due to pollution and urban sprawl.

In front of the Country Club, you can see the canal that feeds the lagoons, but it is (or at least used to be, unless it was cleaned up as part of the project) littered with trash, waste



tires, etc., and during winter you can still witness the arrival of Canadian duck, grey heron, white pelican, as well as see raccoon, beaver, and other endangered species. You can see the birds standing on the tires that are floating in the canal. And this fund could help with the clean up.

**Manuel Zamora** agreed that there are a lot of species there, adding that 1,800 tires were removed from just one area. He shared an anecdote of a local resident who used to fish at the lagoon, whom they informed that the fish he was catching was contaminated. They then offered him \$10.00 pesos for every tire he removed, so he has abandoned fishing and is now in the business of removing tires from the site.

He added that the project will not remove any native plants or species, and will also not host any sporting events, but will allow only hiking and bicycling.

**Margarito Quintero** asked about the *Renacimiento* site, and whether the project was scrapped in its entirety, or if they were going to proceed, perhaps at a smaller scale.

**Manuel Zamora** replied that unfortunately there was no one from the State Government in attendance, but that they had already made significant headway in their Technical School project at the site. They had mentioned that they could let them have 10 hectares, but the area they are talking about has a lot of debris and trash, which would require heavy machinery to be removed.

He added that being able to borrow some of this machinery, such as backhoes, would be very helpful in their efforts.

He added that in the issue of waste tires, they had reached an agreement with the previous SEMARNAT representative through which SEMARNAT would take all the tires the Municipal government delivered to them and dispose of them through their project funded by the EPA grant, but are unsure as to whether the new representative would continue with that support.

The Municipal government is also involved in the clean up of the Centinela pile, and some of the tires left are either buried or in ravines, and heavy machinery is necessary to collect them on flat land to be picked up by the trucks contracted under the grant.

**Senator Ducheny** mentioned that the specific pieces of machinery needed probably exist in Imperial Valley, but they would have to let them know what they are first before being certain this is so. She added that Stephen Birdsall, from ICAPCD, would potentially be able to find some of the machinery and see if it could be loaned, or sent for a week or so to be used for the cleanup.

**Kimberly Collins** mentioned that importation of the equipment might be a problem, particularly with the Mexicali Customs Office.

**Manuel Zamora** added that it could be a temporary importation, perhaps through a special permit.

**Kimberly Collins** shared that they have had problems in the past to try to import air equipment temporarily into Mexicali.

**V. Selection of New Co-Chairs.** **Kimberly Collins** shared that since it is a bottom-up process, it would be good for the local representatives elect the next co-chairs. She expressed having heard some rumors that it was going to be a top-down approach, with the Federal representatives assigning someone at will, but felt that would go against the spirit of Border 2012, since it is important that those at the local level have the ability to elect their leader.

She asked for nominations so the co-chairs can be elected at the next meeting. She asked **Thomas Brinkerhoff** to send an e-mail to everyone asking for nominations.

**Kimberly Collins** felt that perhaps it would be useful to have someone at the federal level serve as co-chairs.

**Dave Fege** replied, partly in jest, that it was ironic to call it a bottom-up approach and have someone at the federal level serve as co-chairs. He added that the EPA felt that co-chairs should not come from the federal level, since local leadership is needed to help solve the problems. This does not mean that local leadership would be completely responsible, by any means, but they do provide motivation, enthusiasm, and leadership. He added that **Brad Poiriez** had expressed that he would be willing to the co-chair if the group selected him.

Enrique, from the Baja California Ecology Department, also expressed to EPA that he felt that the co-chairs should not come from the Federal government, and mentioned that the co-chair could perhaps come from his staff or from the Municipal Ecology Department, although he was non-committal. **Dave Fege** added that an advantage to having them as co-chairs is that they had some authority on air pollution in this area.

There are only two taskforces with Federal co-chairs. One is the Binational Enforcement taskforce, due to the difficulty in having local co-chairs in the area of binational enforcement. The second is Saul Guzman, who serves a co-chair on the San Diego/Tijuana Air Quality taskforce.

**Thomas Brinkerhoff** clarified that **Brad Poiriez** had expressed that he would serve as a co-chair, but only on an interim basis.

**Kathryn Dowling** nominated **Marco Antonio Reyna**.

**Margarito Quintero** mentioned that about two months back he had formally invited **Marco Antonio Reyna** to become a candidate, but he argued that he did not have the time for it, and so it has not been brought up again.

**Marco Antonio Reyna** thanked Kathryn for the invitation, but reiterated that he really did not have the time.

**Kathryn Dowling** once again nominated him and **Manuel Zamora**.

**Kimberly Collins** nominated **Rich Ryan** for the U.S. side.

**Manuel Zamora** also proposed having someone from the State Ecology Department serve as co-chair, since they should be more involved, being that they have the Air Quality webpage, receive EPA funding, etc.

**Margarito Quintero** added that in an edict published in the Baja California Official State Register, it was mentioned the State Ecology Department (*Dirección*, or directorate) would now be changed into a Secretariat. This would give them more power, because they would cease to be a part of the Secretariat of Economic Development.

**Kimberly Collins** asked **Thomas Brinkerhoff** to send out an e-mail indicating the three nominees for the Mexican co-chair, and the two for the U.S. chair.

## **VII. Wrap-Up/Date of Next Meeting.**

**Margarito** and **Kimberly** thanked everyone for their attendance, wishing them a Happy New Year. Thursday, February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2005 was proposed as the date for the next meeting, which will be held at UABC in Mexicali, from 11:00-13:30.

**Session adjourned.**